

Task Force Meeting

June 5, 2004

Meeting Summary

The Long Beach Youth and Gang Violence Prevention Task Force met on Saturday, June 5 to develop strategies and a process to carry out their directive. Anitra Dempsy, Human dignity Officer, opened the meeting with self-introductions and reviewed the meeting agenda. Ms. Dempsy introduced Karen Hillburn, Superintendent Student Services LBUSD, to review the committee structure and framework. Ms. Hillburn also explained the relationship between the Task Force, Resource Team and the Executive Committee. The framework is outlined below.

Task Force – Review and prioritize the findings in the Long Beach Human Relations Commission report on the Gang and Youth Violence and identify potential actions to address them. Subcommittees can be created to provide focused direction and take specific action on emerging themes. The structure includes a Chair, Vice-chair, Recording Secretary, and if necessary, Sub-Committee Leaders.

Resource Team – Supports the work of the Task Force by acting as a resource and providing relevant information.

Executive Committee – Provides engagement of community leadership and links to the local government.

Cynthia Fogg, Youth Services Officer City of Long Beach, reviewed the contents of the resource manual encouraged to use the manual as a living document by adding relevant information that will contribute the Task Force discussions.

Ms. Dempsy introduced Daniel Iacofano from MIG who led the rest meeting discussion. Mr. Iacofano presented a set of Communication Guidelines to assist the group during the process and then began the facilitated discussion.

The Task Force reviewed the themes that emerged during the first meeting and developed specific actions and strategies to address the priority issues. They are listed in bullets below the respective themes.

EMERGING THEMES

- A. **A comprehensive, holistic approach** is needed to address the root causes of youth violence including education, jobs and economic development, health care, housing conditions, race relations, etc. The “Boston Public Health Model” offers powerful insights.
- B. **Successful programs that are operating now in Long Beach** in the areas of conflict resolution, anger management, parenting, mentoring, critical thinking, media literacy etc., should be identified, expanded and scaled up to serve more youth.
- C. **A wide range and diversity of programs** are needed involving children and youth of all ages in the full spectrum of services from prevention to early intervention and treatment.
- D. **The media should be harnessed** to provide positive messages and role models while discouraging behaviors that are dysfunctional and destructive. A media campaign should emphasize peace and not violence and avoid glamorizing gangs. Messages must be multilingual. Private enterprise support (e.g. Charter Communication) should be sought.
- E. **The language of “peace”** must replace the language of violence. We must all be prepared to examine ourselves and be willing to change personal language and behaviors that contribute directly or indirectly to violence. We must be willing to acknowledge and address underlying racial tensions.
- F. **Parenting and family communication skills** should be taught systematically throughout the community. Everyone can learn how to do better.
- G. **Youth engagement** in each step of the process is critical to success.
- H. **Leadership development** programs should be offered to all youth.
- I. **Expanded relationships, partnerships and networking opportunities** among all service providers, organizations and agencies are needed.
- J. The **entire community** must be part of the solution.
- K. **The youth violence initiative in Long Beach must be a long-term sustained effort** involving systematic evaluation and feedback, and commitment of resources.

- L. **Additional resources** must be bought to bear to enable expansion of successful Long Beach programs. Implement “research and resources” team.
- M. A **demonstration or pilot program could be created** to attract the attention of major funding sponsors.

ACTION TEAMS

Media Campaign:	<i>Enrique, Jessica, and James</i>
Parenting:	<i>Karen, Melanie, Bill W., Robin, Grant, and Yolanda</i>
Youth Employment (Address policy/social):	<i>John, Mike B., Derik, Karen, and Jessica</i>
Research & Resource:	<i>Rene, Enrique, Bill W., Bill Q., Robin, Jessica, Mike B., Mike G., and Raymond</i>
Youth Engagement:	<i>Raymond, Mike B.’s Staff, Hilary, Mike G., Enrique, Yolanda, Grant, and Lysa</i>

NEXT STEPS

- Conduct a Task Force meeting on June 14 to discuss formal structure and possibly identify chair
- Action Teams meet
- Conduct a Task Force Meeting: plan next steps, set goals, plan community forum, and develop areas of concentration and materials to present at future community forum
- Implement Media Relations Campaign
- Conduct Community Forum (in September): plan a unique event with sincerity and integrity